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April 25, 2016

Azin Tadjini
Associate Human Rights Officer
Special Procedures Branch
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
CH-1201 Geneva
Switzerland

Dear Ms. Tadjini:

Thank you for your message dated March 16, 2016, concerning our communications with your office of 28 January and 2 February 2016. In that message, you asked for confirmation that Dr. Koray Caliskan and Dr. Sibel Ozbudun would agree to have their names mentioned in a letter to Turkish authorities and to have their names published in the Communications Report of the Special Procedures. We write now to respond to your query.

We have every reason to believe that both Dr. Caliskan and Dr. Ozbudun are comfortable having their names mentioned by the Special Rapporteur. The criminal investigation of Dr. Caliskan on allegations that he insulted the president is ongoing. In Dr. Ozbudun's case, while she was acquitted in March of one of the charges relating to her social media postings, she is still facing an outrageous prosecution under anti-terrorism laws for having shared on social media widely-circulating images that were already in the public arena. According to the Ankara prosecutor's office, merely reposting such images on Facebook allegedly amount to "propaganda" for Kurdish terrorist groups. We believe she would welcome having the Special Rapporteur raise concerns about her case (and all other similar cases) with the Turkish government.

In addition, we would like to draw your attention to our letter to Special Rapporteur David Kaye dated March 17, 2016 in which we enumerate the cases being brought against Drs. Esra Mungan, Muzaffer Kaya, Kıvanç Ersoy and Meral Camcı. The first three of these academics were arrested at the time that we wrote our letter for having participated in a press conference in connection with a Peace Petition (to which all four are signatories) by academics calling for an end to the government's military operations in the Kurdish communities of Turkey's southeastern provinces. The fourth, Dr. Camcı, was out of the country when authorities came to detain her for her participation in the press conference. As a result, she was not arrested at first but later, upon her return to the country. All four were held in pre-trial detention and faced charges of material support for terrorism because they signed a Peace Petition and held a press conference. The two male academics, Muzaffer Kaya and Kıvanç Ersoy, were held in solitary

confinement. In being transferred from an initial prison to a maximum security facility, Drs. Kaya and Ersoy were subjected to humiliating strip searches and prolonged nudity. On Friday, April 22nd, following the first hearing in the case against these four academics, the prosecutor dropped the anti-terrorism charges and reduced the allegations against them to violations of the notorious article of the Turkish Criminal Code (Article 301) concerning the denigration of the Turkish state. In addition, all four academics were released from detention while their cases will proceed under the newly reduced charges. While these four academics now face reduced charges (and relatedly reduced potential prison terms of a maximum of two years), we believe that the humiliating and punitive conditions of pre-trial detention to which they were subjected for nearly ninety days and the continuation of criminal charges against them deserve the attention of the Special Rapporteur. We are certain that all four would be comfortable with having their names used. All four have suffered widespread defamation in the Turkish media and would undoubtedly be pleased to see their names used in official correspondence from the Special Rapporteur's office in an entirely different light.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to remaining in communication with your office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'B. Baron' followed by a horizontal flourish.

Beth Baron
MESA President
Professor, City University of New York

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Amy W. Newhall' in a cursive style.

Amy W. Newhall
MESA Executive Director
Associate Professor, University of Arizona

cc: UN Special Rapporteur, David Kaye